

# **SPECIAL MEETING NORTH SMITHFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

**JUNE 1, 2015**

**KENDALL-DEAN SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

**7:00 P.M.**

The meeting began at 7:00 P.M. with the prayer and the pledge to the flag. Council members present were Ms. Alves, Mrs. Nadeau, Mr. Zwolenski and Mr. Boucher. (Mr. Alter deceased) Also in attendance was Town Administrator Hamilton. Former Town Solicitor Lombardi sat in for a brief time for Town Solicitor Igliazzi who arrived a short time later.

## **GRANT OF EASEMENT TO ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (BIKE PATH/WOONSOCKET LOCAL PROTECTION PROJECT)**

Mr. Boucher had requested Mr. Igliazzi to contact the Army Corps of Engineers to see if the town could give the easement directly to them.

**MOTION** by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to reconsider the motion made on May 18, 2015 granting an easement to the City of Woonsocket.

**MOTION** by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to approve granting of an easement for the amount of \$1.00 to the Army Corps of Engineers for Assessor's Plat 3, Lot 183 for the bike path/Woonsocket Local Protection Project.

## **LICENSES FOR BLAZIN WINGS INC. D/B/A BUFFALO WILD WINGS**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to grant a coin-operated mechanical devices license, a jukebox license and a victualing license, contingent upon Department of Health approval.**

## **RIDOT EASEMENTS AND ACQUISITIONS FOR SLATERSVILLE STONE ARCH BRIDGE PROJECT**

**Town Planner Robert Ericson stated there are some issues that remain unclear and he has requested both verbal and written explanations.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to continue this to June 8, 2015.**

## **SOLAR POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT PROPOSAL**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to move this item up next on the agenda.**

**Mr. Frank Epps of Energy Development Partners, LLC presented a proposal for a twenty-five year purchase agreement to purchase the net metering credits from a solar facility proposed to be built at 0 Pound Hill Road which is the sandpit area of the Landfill and Resource Recovery property. Mr. Epps is planning to build a 2.5 to 3.0 megawatt solar facility taking up approximately fifteen to eighteen acres. The facility will be interconnected to National Grid and will be able to generate net metering credits that can then be applied to the**

**town's meters.**

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**In the proposal there are two options: 1. A 12.5 cent net meter credit with a two percent escalator on an annual basis or 2. A price of 15.9 cents fixed for twenty-five years.**

**Mr. Epps estimates the town will save roughly \$1.7 million or \$1.8 million over the twenty-five years.**

**When questioned about access, Mr. Epps commented it could be off Route 7 or off Pound Hill Road where there is an easement from National Grid.**

**Mr. Zwolenski was concerned with potential fees and the 180-day exclusivity period.**

**Mr. Epps named some of the possible fees and was amenable to reducing the exclusivity period to 45 days.**

**Mr. Lombardi offered a couple of recommendations that he felt should be included in the agreement.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to authorize the Town Administrator to sign a letter of agreement subject to final approval by the Town Council, to include language that there be an exclusivity period of 45 days, an opt out provision in the final contract, the expense of peer review to be agreed upon by both parties and that the letter of intent be subject to the Solicitor's approval.**

## **MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

**Finance Director Jason Parmelee gave an overview of the administration's budget proposal. Budget highlights are:**

- Provides for an overall budget increase of 2.79%**
- Provides for an overall Tax Levy increase of 2.54% (less than the 4.00% cap)**
- Residential, Commercial and Tangible rates to increase by a larger % to offset Prior Year Assessment Corrections and Abatements on Real Property and Motor Vehicles**
- Includes more conservative estimates in every revenue category other than Property Taxes, State Aid and Interest on Investments (re-budgeted for FY2016)**
- Provides for two new positions in the town (one additional DPW Staff, as well as moving the Part Time Inspector to a Full Time Code Enforcement position) and one additional staff in the Fire Department**
- Provides for two potential elections in FY2016**
- Provides for a stipend of \$1,500 for Board of Assessment Review to ensure Board meetings/minutes/approval recording for Abatements**

- Includes a partial consolidation of IT department functions within the Town and Police Department into one Town Department (Audits and Computer Services)
- Provides for a minimal increase in Fund Balance Restoration Account (\$40,000 to \$100,000)
- Provides for approximate level funding of Police Department other than contractual increases
- Provides for an increase in the Fire Department Contracted Funding Rates (no increase for 5 years) as well as the above staff member addition
- Includes merging of Highway Department road expenditures (road resurfacing, crack seal & hot & cold patch) into a catch-all Road Repairs/Resurfacing account
- Provides for Highway Department rental of Catch Basin Cleaning Truck
- Supports all debt service payments of Principal and Interest for the Town and School Department
- Provides for a larger increase in the amount of OPEB Retirement Funding (\$25,000 to \$100,000)
- Provides for the final year of Settlement Obligations in the amount of \$95,000

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- Provides for a substantial increase in Capital Outlay of \$348,515 from \$326,082 to \$674,597 in FY2016

- Includes Grants and Contributions as they were presented in the past

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION by Mr. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 3 to 1 on a roll call vote (Ms. Alves voted no) at 9:00 P.M. to enter into executive session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(1) Any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons provided that such person or persons affected shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held at an open meeting.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to come out of executive session at 9:58 P.M. and to seal the minutes. No motions were made and no votes were taken.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote at 9:58 P.M. to extend the meeting to 10:30 P.M.**

## **SCHOOL BUDGET**

**Superintendent of School Stephen Lindberg provided budget documents for the Council members noting that the proposed budget is within the 4% allowable local appropriation increase and supports/maintains:**

- Projected adjustments in employee salaries and benefits
- Needed adjustments to Pupil Personnel Services, Technology and

## **Central Office budgets**

- **Continued and necessary curriculum revision/development work**
- **Middle School Math Textbooks**
- **Minor increases to building-based budgets**
- **Teaching and support staff:**
  - **Preschool through Grade 5 level with a net reduction of one teacher due to class size shifting enrollments; one special education teacher due to efficient scheduling/programming approach**
  - **High/Middle schools retained their present teaching staff which does not allow for much-needed adjustments to course offerings nor addresses the much-needed restoration of the Guidance Department Clerk/Typist from part-time back to full-time**
  - **Custodial and Maintenance services**
  - **English Language Learner Teacher**
  - **Full-day Kindergarten**
  - **Present level of student support from School Psychologists [reduced (.5) from FY14 to FY15], Social Workers and Nurses**
- **All schools' extracurricular programs and offerings which includes a full Music program and support for various after-school opportunities including related transportation and ceremonies**
- **Current level of Guidance Counselors at the Middle/High schools**
- **Athletic Program/offerings including Middle School Athletics; however, the FY16 Operational budget amount is less than it was three years ago due to a fiscal parameter**

**At this point in time, funding is unable to address the following:**

## **Operational**

- **Math Textbooks - High School Algebra I & II and Geometry**
- **Elementary Science materials**
- **High School Science classroom supplies**
- **Advanced Placement course texts that would support High School proposed redesigned program offerings**
- **Unanticipated out-of-district tuitions account**
- **Partial restoration to the Athletic department operational budget**
- **Middle School Social Studies Technology request**
- **Facilities repair and improvement projects, equipment**
- **Technology hardware and support - possible Capital budget submission consideration**

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## **Staffing examples:**

- **High School proposed redesigned program offerings**
- **Elementary Math Interventionists**
- **General Maintenance/Electrician Person (System-wide)**
- **High School .5 Librarian**
- **Middle School .5 STEM Elective Teacher**
- **Middle School .5 Math Interventionist**
- **Restoration of a Guidance Clerk [from .5 to 1.0]**
- **Support for Elementary Open Circle program**
- **.5 Groundskeeper (System-wide)**



## **CEDAR SWAMP FLOOD MITIGATION**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to move this item up next on the agenda.**

**Conservation Commission Chairman Paul Soares explained there is property located off of Greenville Road and Route 146 that was donated to the town in 2010. A family of beavers has moved in, causing serious flooding. He noted the water is fifteen inches higher than when the land was acquired. Mr. Soares has found a method to alleviate the problem, a flexible leveler pipe, which would be a permanent solution.**

**Mr. Michael Rapko owns property abutting the land in question. The good news is that, with the higher water level, kids are not using ATVs on his property. He also noted that the swamp collects water that goes into Cherry Brook so the more water you have at Cedar Swamp, the fewer complaints you will get from the residents near Cherry Brook.**

**Mr. Soares disagreed with that statement, noting that some flow to Cherry Brook also comes from a nearby stream. He stated this is conservation land and should be open to the public. The access is totally under water.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted on an aye vote at 10:28 P.M. to extend the meeting to 10:40 P.M.**

**Mr. Rapko stated the public access to this property is across his property and he does not have to grant an easement over the cart road to the public to get into the woods.**

**Mr. Soares claimed there is still other access to the property.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to appropriate \$1,492.00 from the Contingency Fund to install a flexible leveler.**

## **USE OF KENDALL-DEAN BUILDING FOR SCHOOL AND TOWN ADMINISTRATION**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to move this item up on the agenda.**

**Ms. Hamilton felt it was necessary to get some written confirmation from the School Committee that town offices would be allowed to use Kendall-Dean for administration purposes. Otherwise, it would be fruitless to move forward with the renovation project approved by the voters last November.**

**Mrs. Nadeau stated the School Committee was supposed to vote on this back in April or May but a vote was never taken. She was told the only way anyone would be able to do anything was if the school bonds go through.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to send a letter to the School Committee drafted under Mr. Boucher's name requesting that they put on their next agenda approval of the use of Kendall-Dean for town and school administration.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote at 10:40 P.M. to extend the meeting to 10:45 P.M.**

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**LEGISLATION RE: BLACKSTONE VALLEY WASTEWATER TREATMENT AUTHORITY ACT**

**Mr. Boucher spoke about legislation that has been sent to the General Assembly to establish the Blackstone Valley Wastewater Treatment Authority Act which will give the town authority to discuss what is needed to work with the City of Woonsocket in dealing with the issues regarding wastewater. He noted that the Narragansett Bay Authority is regulated by the Public Utilities Commission and North Smithfield is regulated by the City of Woonsocket. This Act would give the town a venue to express views.**

**MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote at 10:42 P.M. to extend the meeting to 11:00 P.M.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION by Mr. Boucher, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to enter executive session at 10:44 P.M. pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation to discuss the Interjurisdictional Water and Wastewater Agreements with the City of Woonsocket.**

**MOTION by Mrs. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and voted 4 to 0 on a roll call vote to come out of executive session at 10:55 P.M. and to seal the minutes. No motions were made and no votes were taken.**

**MOTION by Ms. Alves, seconded by Mrs. Nadeau, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to adjourn at 10:56 P.M.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Debra A. Todd, Town Clerk**